

May 6, 2003

Representative John Dingell
United States House of Representatives
2328 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Dingell:

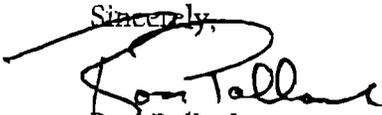
Families USA congratulates you on the introduction of the "Strengthening Our States Act of 2003." This bill contains many important provisions that will strengthen the Medicaid program and help to maintain services for the 47 million Americans who rely on it.

As you well know, Medicaid provides health insurance to America's most vulnerable seniors, children, working families, and people with disabilities. Seniors receive prescription drug coverage and long-term care services through Medicaid. Children obtain vital screening and prevention services under Medicaid. Medicaid also provides the crucial services such as personal care and therapy that people with disabilities need.

We commend you especially for including temporary state fiscal relief in the bill. A temporary increased in funding, such as proposed, will help keep millions of people from losing coverage or benefits and help states maintain commitments during these difficult fiscal times. We also strongly support the provisions of the Strengthening Our States Act that appropriately allow states the option to cover legal immigrants under the Medicaid and SCHIP programs.

Families USA is dedicated to assuring that all Americans have access to health care—and the Strengthening Our States Act makes huge strides in strengthening and protecting the Medicaid program. We support your efforts to pass this important legislation. Please let us know how we can help you as this bill goes through the process towards enactment.

Sincerely,


Ron Pollack
Executive Director